

Benefit of good ripe Cyder: Useful Observations on the Bile, especially when it becomes porraceous, or black, acid or alkaline, and the prodigious Acrimony it sometimes acquires: On the good Effects of the continued Use of *Eccoprotics* in proper Cases; with several others equally valuable, which are much better set down in the Treatise, than can possibly be done in any Abstract.

VI. *An Abstract by C. Mortimer, M. D. Secr. R. S. of an Inaugural Dissertation published at Wittemberg 1736. by Dr. Abraham Vater, F. R. S. concerning the Cure of the Bite of a Viper, cured by Sallad-oil.*

**T**HIS Tract is intituled, *Dissertatio Inaug. Medica, de Antidoto novo adversus Viperarum morsum præstantissimo in Anglia haud ita pridem detecto, quam præside D<sup>n</sup>. Abr. Vaterno pro gradu Doctoris ventilandam proponit Fridericus Genslerus Gedanensis, Sept. 11. 1736. Vitembergæ, in 4<sup>to</sup>.*

Our Author was first informed of the Use of Oil of Olives against the Bite of Vipers by a Letter written to him by Sir Conrad Sprengell, Anno 1734. wherein he gives him an Account of the Experiments then lately shewn by William Oliver\*, before several Members of the ROYAL SOCIETY, and others: He had communicated the Contents of this Letter to a Cousin, one Dr. Vater at Dresden, who had an Opportunity

\* *Philos. Transact.* N<sup>o</sup> 443. p. 313, &c.

portunity of trying the Efficacy of this Remedy, by an Accident happening in that City; which Case being remarkable, he hath related it at large in the above-mentioned Dissertation, and is as follows :

The head Journeyman in the Royal Dispensary at *Dresden*, being the last Year preparing some *Italian Vipers* for a Patient of Distinction, was, through Negligence, bitten by one of them in one of his Fingers. The Man, finding himself wounded, was mightily frightened, and immediately fell to turning over Physic-books, in order to find out a Remedy, whereby he might ward off the Danger which he was sensible hung over him. But he found little Comfort in those Books ; on the contrary, he was grieved in the highest manner, upon reading in one of them, that Wounds from *Vipers* are commonly deadly, and that there remains very little Help to be given. Being in these Streights, he tried various things ; among others he applied *Theriaca* outwardly to the Wound, but felt no Relief from it ; and in the Space of a few Hours, his whole Arm swelling to an enormous Degree, he felt great Pain in it, with remarkable Tensions under his Arm-pit towards his Heart, attended with a Faintness. Therefore, almost despairing of Recovery, having tried all things in vain, he went to my above-mentioned Cousin *Vater*, and asked his Assistance. He having been informed of the Virtue of *Olive-oil* in this Case, as I have before mentioned, order'd the Man to anoint his whole Arm therewith hot, and several times, upon which the desired Effect soon followed : For the Arm, after one or two Anointings, began to grow less ; the Pains, with the other Symptoms, were asswaged, and gradually

ally ceased, and the Patient recover'd perfectly in a Day or two. He took nothing inwardly besides a simple Mixture \* with an anodyne mineral Liquor, by the Advice of my Cousin, whereupon a copious Sweat ensued, which sensibly relieved the Patient. We do not disown but that this Medicine contributed greatly to the Cure, although the chief Part in this Affair is to be ascribed to the *Oil of Olives*, because upon anointing therewith, the Symptoms abated instantly. I had this whole Case from the Mouth of the Man himself, who was bitten, and thus cured.

I shall pass over what our Author saith concerning the Nature and different Species of *Vipers*; concerning the Effects of the Bite of *Vipers* on Men and Brutes; his Examination of the Venom of *Vipers*; the *Phænomena* observed upon opening Brutes killed by the Bite of *Vipers*; the Cure of these Bites by the Application of external Remedies, and by giving Antidotes internally; the two famous Antidotes, the *Mungos-root*, and the *Serpentine-stone*, called the Magnet of Poisons; as being only Collections from Authors, and containing nothing new. But speaking of the *Serpentine* or *Viper-stone*, he relates a very extraordinary Accident, if true, from *Kæmpfer's Amenit.* p. 579. The Case was this: In the House of a Dutch Governor on the Coast of *Choromandel*, a Servant Maid happen'd to be bit in the Foot by a *Cobra Cabelo*. The *Serpentine-stone* was immediately laid on, which falling off, and no other being to be had, nor any new Milk being at hand to wash out the Pores of the Stone in, a wet Nurse being in the House,

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\* *Sp. Vitriol* dulcif. *Sp. Vitriol* p. i. *Sp. V.* p. iij.

Houfe, who was anxious for the sudden Effects of the Poison, milked some Milk upon the Stone out of her own Breasts; whereupon her Nipple began immediately to be painful, and soon after the whole Breast of that Side fwelled, and was inflamed, even to the hazard of her Life for three Days together, and the Hardness did not leave her Breast in less than 10 Days. It must be remarked, that her Nipple was before somewhat excoriated by the Goom of her Nurfing, whereby the small Veins being laid bare, it was readier to receive the Infection of the Venom render'd more active by the Warmth of the Milk.

When he comes to speak of *Oil of Olives* in particular, and its Effects against Poison in general, he cites a remarkable Passage from *Matthiolum* in his Comment, Lib. II. *Dioscorid.* p. 232. where he says, I have found by Experience, that Oil prepared by myself, into which a great Number of *Scorpions* had been put, being anointed on the Heart, and where the Pulsations of the Arteries of the Hands and Feet are felt, frees from all Poisons; nay, it likewise cures those who have been bit by *Vipers*, or stung by any other venomous Animals. Our Author, comparing this with the Virtue of the Oil alone, for the Bite of a *Viper*, concludes, that the *Scorpions* infused in it add nothing to its real Virtue.

He concludes this Dissertation, by endeavouring to explain the Manner of its operating, which he attributes to its fat inviscating Nature, whereby it sheathes the Spicula of the Poison. He remarks, that *Celsus*, Lib. 5. c. 27. advises, after dipping a Person in an *Hydrophobia* in cold Water, to put him into  
warm

warm Oil. Last of all he mentions the great Secret of the *Viper-catchers*, that is, the Fat of *Vipers*; which, he thinks, acts in the same manner as the *Olive-oil*.

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VII. *Abstracts of two Letters from M. Dufay, F. R. S. &c. to Dr. Mortimer, Secr. R. S. concerning the Efficacy of Oil of Olives in curing the Bite of Vipers.*

*Part of a Letter from Mons<sup>r</sup>. Dufay to Dr. Mortimer, dated at Paris, Aug. 8. 1737. [Translated from the French, by T. S. M. D.]*

AFTER I had given the Academy an Account of your Observations on the Remedy against the Bite of *Vipers*, a Committee was appointed to make the same Experiments here. But whether it be, that our *Vipers* are more venomous than yours, or that the Bites were more considerable, of the several Pigeons and Fowls that were bit, not one recover'd, though they were immediately rubbed with Oil. They died in a Quarter of an Hour, or in an Hour's time at farthest. The like Experiments have been made on several other Animals; but as the Gentlemen are resolved to repeat them, I do not send you an Account of them. All I can say at present is, that the Remedy seems to be not so sure here as in *England*, where I find by the publick News-papers, that a *Rattlesnake* has been lately brought, and that its Bite has been cured by the same Remedy.

*Signed,*

Dufay.

*Abstract*